

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Withdrawn) A method of delivering a component to the colon of an animal comprising:
coating the component with a fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate; and
orally administering the coated component to the animal.
2. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible
carbohydrate is fructan.
3. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 2 wherein the fructan has an average degree of
polymerization in the approximate range of 2 to 60.
4. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 3 wherein the fructan has an average degree of
polymerization in the approximate range of 2 to 20.
5. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 4 wherein the fructan has an average degree of
polymerization in the approximate range of 2 to 10.
6. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible
carbohydrate is fructo-oligosaccharide.
7. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible
carbohydrate is neosugar.

8. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 wherein the component is one or more of a mineral, vitamin, drug, bacteria, yeast, immune stimulator, nutrient, nutraceutical, electrolyte, chelated mineral, mold, enzyme, energy-providing compound, antibody, or acid.
9. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 8 wherein the component is bacteria from the genus *Lactobacillus* or *Bifidobacterium*.
10. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 8 wherein the component is a nutraceutical.
11. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 8 wherein the component is an enzyme.
12. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 8 wherein the component is an immune stimulator.
13. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 8 wherein the component is a drug.
14. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is utilized as an energy source by *Bifidobacterium* species, but not by *Salmonella* species.
15. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is utilized as an energy source by *Lactobacillus* species, but not by *Escherichia coli*.
16. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 wherein the coating step comprises applying powdered fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate with a liquid to form a thin film coating on the component.

17. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 16 further comprising repeating the step of applying the powdered fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate and liquid to achieve a multi-layered coating.

18. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 wherein the coating step comprises combining the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate with a liquid to form a mixture and atomizing and spraying the mixture on the component to form a thin film coating on the component.

19. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 18 further comprising repeating the step of applying the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate and liquid mixture to achieve a multi-layered coating.

20. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 comprising coating the component with fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate and one or more flavoring agent.

21. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1 wherein the component is a bacteria.

22. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 21 wherein the bacteria is from the genus *Lactobacillus* or *Bifidobacteria*.

23. (Currently Amended) A coated component for targeted delivery to the colon of an animal, comprising:

- a) a component having a desired activity in the colon of an animal; and
- b) a coating disposed on the component, the coating consisting essentially of a fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate ~~made in accordance with the method of claim 1.~~

24. (Withdrawn) A method of delivering a component to the colon of an animal comprising: coating the component with one or more prebiotics; and orally administering the coated component to the animal.

25. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 24 wherein the prebiotic is a fructose-based oligosaccharide, peptide, protein, or lipid that is not digested or absorbed in a stomach or small intestine, but is fermented by bacteria present in the colon.
26. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 24 comprising coating the component with a mixture of two or more prebiotics.
27. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 26 wherein one of the prebiotics is fructo-oligosaccharide.
28. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 24 comprising coating the component with a mixture of one or more prebiotic and one or more flavoring agent.
29. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 24 wherein the component is one or more of a mineral, vitamin, drug, bacteria, yeast, immune stimulator, nutrient, nutraceutical, electrolyte, chelated mineral, mold, enzyme, energy-providing compound, antibody, or acid.
30. (Original) A composition for colon-targeted delivery comprising:
one or more components to be delivered to the colon; and
a fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate coating surrounding the component.
31. (Currently Amended) The composition of claim 30 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is a fructose-based oligosaccharide, peptide, protein, or lipid that is not digested or absorbed in a stomach or small intestine, but is fermented by bacteria present in the colon.
32. (Original) The composition of claim 30 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is inulin.

33. (Original) The composition of claim 30 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is neosugar.
34. (Original) The composition of claim 30 wherein the coating further comprises a flavor enhancing agent.
35. (Original) The composition of claim 30 wherein the component is one or more of a mineral, vitamin, drug, bacteria, yeast, immune stimulator, nutrient, nutraceutical, electrolyte, chelated mineral, mold, enzyme, energy-providing compound, antibody, or acid.
36. (Original) The composition of claim 35 wherein the component is one or more beneficial bacteria from the genus *Lactobacillus* or *Bifidobacteria*.
37. (Currently Amended) A composition for colon-targeted delivery comprising:
one or more components to be delivered to the colon; and
a coating ~~of one or more prebiotics~~ surrounding the component, wherein ~~at least one of the prebiotics is~~ the coating comprises a fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate.
38. (Withdrawn) A method of masking the flavor of a component to be administered orally to an animal comprising coating the component with combination of a fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate and a flavoring agent.
39. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 38 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is fructo-oligosaccharide, inulin, or neosugar.
40. (Withdrawn) A method of enhancing the flowability of a component comprising coating the component with a fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate.

41. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 40 within the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is fructo-oligo saccharide, inulin, or neosugar.
42. (Withdrawn - currently amended) The method of claim 24 wherein ~~one of the prebiotics~~ is the coating comprises a soya oligosaccharide.
43. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 42 wherein the soya oligosaccharide is stachyose.
44. (Withdrawn - currently amended) The method of claim 24 wherein ~~one of the prebiotics~~ is the coating comprises lactulose.
45. (Withdrawn - currently amended) The method of claim 24 wherein ~~one of the prebiotics~~ is the coating comprises a galactooligosaccharide.
46. (Currently Amended) The composition of claim 37 wherein ~~one of the prebiotics is~~ the coating comprises a soya oligosaccharide.
47. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 46 wherein the soya oligosaccharide is stachyose.
48. (Currently Amended) The composition of claim 37 wherein ~~one of the prebiotics is~~ the coating comprises lactulose.
49. (Currently Amended) The composition of claim 37 wherein ~~one of the prebiotics is~~ the coating comprises a galactooligosaccharide.